



K4GSO.us

The Oracle

Newsletter of the Silver Springs Radio Club

Oldest Radio Club in Marion County, FL



March 2020

President's Message

Elbert Wilkinson, KQ3K

MEMBERSHIP:

This train just keeps rolling towards our goal for 2020 of 100 members. At the February meeting, the applications of Jeff Elkins, KX4XI, Extra, and Kathleen Elkins, KO4BZT, Technician, were approved. We look forward to each becoming active in club activities, so welcome! Another application was approved at the March board meeting and will be presented at the March General Meeting.

Don't forget, we have asked older members to adopt a new member, especially those recently licensed. I know I am repeating myself on this subject, but this is important for their success in the hobby and the club. The information and technical details can be overwhelming, so help them out. End of sermon for this month. Rinse and repeat next month!

HAM SCHOOL:

On Saturday, February 29, Ham School was in session at Green Clover Hall. Those unable to attend missed out on a beautiful, cool, low humidity day to spend time outside playing with antennas. Those joining in the fun were Darrell Franchuk, KG4CCB; Jim Burgess, KN4MIV; Bert Garcia, N8NN; Randy Maggelet, N1JOO; Curtis Neuman, KG4DIW; Roger Staley, K4ZFW; Bill Gillespie, KW5BG; Ivory Williams, W6IVY; Carl Berry, KC5CMX; and me. Also attending were two CERT members, Ruth Ingmire, KI4OLI and Roger Ingmire, KI4CVP, who heard about our Ham School and needed assistance with their VHF radios and antennas.

Several antennas were set-up and tested for operation. Roger set-up his lawn chair and issued forth sage advice and adult supervision. Various disrespectful comments were redirected to Roger all in fun! Attendees assisted Bert and Randy in setting-up a new QRP antenna used for POTA activations and me with a Buddipole and a Buddistick. During the session, just for fun we were able to tune in and work operators from the NC QSO party and two POTA contacts on a KX2 at 10 watts.

Next Club Meeting

March 17

(SSRC Meets the third Tuesday of each month)
Green Clover Hall
319 SE 26th Terrace
Ocala, FL

6:00 Elmering & Socializing

7:00 Business Meeting

Program: Spy Satellites, Phil Hogan, W8PNZ

SSRC Board of Directors meets the first Tuesday of each month, 7:00 PM at the same location. All are welcome.

Upcoming Events/Meetings

[Click here to sign up.](#)

[ARES Update](#) - Ron Viola, KS4SW

The next meeting is March 21, 10:00 AM at the EOC.

Marion County Day – March 28

[Education/Testing](#) – Jim Burgess, KN4MIV

March 10, 7:00 PM Green Clover Hall

March 21, 1:30 PM EOC

Silver Springs Radio Club Net

K4GSO

Mondays at 7:30 PM

146.610, PL 123

President's Message (Continued)

Additional sessions will continue to focus on antenna, HF digital modes, basic Linux programming for the Raspberry Pi and VHF digital modes. Suggestions for other subjects would be appreciated. As previously noted, your club officers and directors will be leading Ham School, however, other club members will be asked to participate as subject matter experts. Please say "yes" when you are asked. The sessions will be open to all new amateurs regardless of club affiliation with the goal of growing our club.

There is one caveat, however: as a courtesy to those who will teach, attendees will need to sign-up on the website so that we can plan accordingly. If no one signs up by the Thursday before the session, then that session will be postponed to the following month.

LICENSING CLASS:

Last month we announced the formation of a Technician licensing class to be held at the EOC with the club partnering with MERT. The classes will be taught by Dave Gustafson, WB9EEH, and Rich Erlichman, ND4G, on Saturday, March 7th and 14th from 8:00am until 3:00pm with an hour break for lunch. VE Testing will take place at the EOC on March 21st at 1:30PM. As of today, March 4, there are 13 students who have signed up.

MARION COUNTY DAY:

Mark your calendars for March 28th for Marion County Day to be held at the Marion County Governmental complex. SSRC participated last year in the 175th Marion County Anniversary Celebration and had a great showing with a number of visitors. The county wants to host another community event and our application has been submitted. More details should be provided by the county in the next week or so. We will need members to help set-up, man the displays and demonstrate radio operations. More details will follow at the next General Meeting. We will use this event as Ham School for the month of March.

FLORIDA PARKS-ON-THE-AIR:

This year's event will be held on April 4th and 5th running eight hours a day from 10:00am to 6:00pm. We are in the process of contacting the officials at Silver Springs State Park to reserve a pavilion or

alternatively operate from Indian Lake State Park which is about five miles north of Silver Springs State Park. This is another fun event to test our ability to operate in a grid-down or emergency situation without commercial or generator power. It is also good training for field day and general radio operations!

MARCH FOR BABIES:

Next up on the calendar is The March for Babies on April 25th at the Baseline Greenway trailhead. That weekend is also the Florida QSO party. We are committed to the March for Babies and more details will be provided at the April General Meeting. We need members to work the March, so please sign up on the website. This is another high-profile public service event for us to help our community and support a great cause. I encourage all members, especially new amateurs, who need help or want to learn, please sign-up to work the event. There are lots of members who would be more than happy to assist you. It is fun and only takes a few hours out of your Saturday morning. You will also be fed! As this is the last Saturday of the month, this will also be a Ham School session. We need someone to volunteer to work with Ron Viola, KS4SW, on the net control station.

FLORIDA QSO PARTY:

As if April 25th wasn't already busy with the March For Babies, the Florida QSO Party is that same day and on Sunday the 26th. We don't expect the same club members to work both events, but you can if you so desire. Realistically, we have enough members to staff both, proving once and for all that we can walk and chew gum at the same time and not fall over! More details to follow at the March General Meeting. As this is the last Saturday of the month, this too will also be a Ham School session.

FIELD DAY – JUNE 27 & 28:

This year the club is returning to Green Clover Hall where we will set-up the radios inside the air-conditioned meeting room. We have suffered enough in the heat and humidity over the last few years which dampened participation. The facility has been officially reserved with the County. This year's co-chairman is Wayne Brown, N4FP, who has some fresh ideas on getting us better organized. Stay tuned for details and plan to sign-up to work Field Day.

President's Message (Continued)

EVERYBODY HAS A JOB:

SSRC wants you to be involved and there are a number of committees and activities where we can use and you can practice your skills:

Programs	Membership	Education & Training
Activities	Perry Field	Contesting
V. E. Team	Website	Newsletter
Repeater	Hamfest	

We have assigned many of you to a committee(s) based upon your previous involvement and interests.

You can be on more than one, which is great, so if one or more is of interest, email me. Take an interest and get involved. Finally, and I've gone on long enough, we have had a number of our new members sign-up for the Hamfest Committee and other activities which is very encouraging that we are doing something right in our club. To those new members – Thank You! We are glad you are with us and are getting involved. You are an inspiration to all of us.

That's all for now, folks. Ham On and stay Radio-Active!

SSRC's Perry Field—"My New Hamshack"

by Jim Fitzreiter, K3QHO

I have been a ham for about 58 years, ever since 9th grade, and had an Extra Class license almost since I was first licensed. After leaving my hometown in Erie, PA, I moved to a HOA-restricted development, in Summerfield, Florida. Not a friendly environment for ham radio operations. I was not concerned when I moved here about those restrictions and got by with a VHF/UHF walkie talkie.

After 30 years of inactivity on HF CW, I recently decided to get back on the air. The development's restrictions were now part of a bigger set of challenges!

The first challenge was the lack of an HF rig. A lifelong friend of mine generously gifted me his back-up rig. It is an ICom 730, an older, but very nice HF rig.

The second challenge was could I communicate on my favorite mode—CW? I was not certain, so I listened to W1AW a couple of times over the Internet and found that I could copy 10 WPM good enough to get by.

The third problem was what to use for an antenna? I tried a wire strung along the gutter, but that did not work very well. The second antenna was a 40-meter magnetic loop. This one requires retuning every time you move frequency even just a little bit. Then at the Silver Springs club Hamfest I found a couple of 40-meter Hamsticks and brought them to make a Hamstick dipole. This was an inexpensive solution for a temporary outdoor antenna.

While at the hamfest, I found out about the club's Perry Field site and its potential for me to get back on the air with real antennas, even if it was not at home.

So I joined the club and got access to Perry Field, which is less than five miles from my QTH. It is a ***fantastic*** site! By using the club's Yaesu FT 2000 transceiver, the Rhombics and beam antennas, I can work just about any station that I hear. It was like I had died and gone to Heaven! All I had to bring was my straight key and I was in business, and no more problems trying to erect a "hidden" antenna. So, just a short drive and I can get on the air with more antennas than I could have ever imagined. It is also quiet, and an escape from my "Honey Do" obligations.

To sum up my experience so far, I really enjoy the club meetings, the friends that I've made so far, and the Perry Field site is a fantastic resource for a radio club to have. Thank you ALL for welcoming me with open arms, support and encouragement! :-)

[2019 Club Minutes and Financial Reports](#)

Welcome to the K4GSO Repeater, Ocala

By Carl Berry, KC5CMX

Anyone who has spent any time on the 146.60 repeater in Ocala has heard my daughter, Krystal making the announcement. Well, I'm going to try to paint a picture in your mind of what we have and how it all comes together to work and get the messages through.

We presently have our Hytera DMR Repeater online. It is transmitting at 450 feet on a CommScope VHF antenna. (Yes, we know it has been misbehaving lately and should be fixed soon.)

The way it works is the signal initiates from your radio on 146.010 which is the receive frequency for the repeater. It comes in from the antenna on the tower, goes through the duplexer (basically filter cavities for desensing), and into the repeater. From there, the signal is simultaneously retransmitted back through the transmit cavities on the duplexer on the frequency you hear, 146.610. There is a PL tone of 123.0 which means your radio must transmit a subaudible tone to activate the receive circuitry on the repeater.

The controller is an ARCOM RC-210. It has an internal clock and a DVR module used to store and make announcements. Presently, it is connected to the repeater as an external controller and makes the announcements according to either a schedule or sent randomly. It may handle up to four different repeaters at the same time and direct the signals accordingly.

The repeater also has an internal controller which allows it to operate independently of the RC-210. Changes to the settings may be done either onsite or through RF transmissions. The controller is presently not capable of supporting the Yaesu, but a \$35.00 cable will take care of that. It will operate with CW ID only without it.

The Hytera repeater is also capable of operating DMR, Digital Mobile Radio. However, internet is not available at this site for our use, so it is not active. It also has to be licensed by Hytera which we do not have. Our backup repeater is a Yaesu DR-1X. It is capable of operating Fusion in digital or analog mode. It is capable of automatically switching to analog from digital and vice versa, depending on the signal received. It is

presently set and locked in analog mode only, so when it is in operation, only analog signals are received and transmitted. When transmitting in digital mode, it sounds like a really loud fan with an annoying grinding buzz. If we operate digital on this repeater then the radios must have a DCS code set to filter out the noise. It really aggravates those who use it, so it stays on analog.

The power supply is currently a 35A Astron. It is more than adequate for running the Hytera and the Yaesu has its own internal power supply with the ability to run on external 12 volts, if necessary.

The computer is needed to update either the repeater or controller onsite. Windows 7 is optimal, but with Windows 10 dominant now, we have adapted.

The coax to connect the equipment is either 1 ¼" or 1" hardline. They are connected using UHF N-connectors. Between the cables coming in and where the coax connects there are Polyphaser lightening arrestors. When there is a strike, the electricity is shunted to ground thereby avoiding the possibility of frying the finals. (We did lose the Hytera in 2018 when hams were talking on it and it was hit. It fried the finals and the Yaesu was put online until it was repaired.)

We have an Icom 2-meter radio on low power to be used onsite for testing the repeater and making announcements when it is taken down for maintenance.

There is another Yaesu repeater identical to ours in another rack owned by one of the members, Andy Allen, K2ADA, and it is setup strictly for Fusion. It is remotely connected to the internet side of Fusion via RF link to his home station. There is a whole book to be written on that so that's all I will say about it.

Lastly, we have our call sign trustee shown on the cabinet. This is an FCC requirement, along with our contact information. The repeater must be coordinated with the powers in charge, such as FASMA (FRC replacement) on a bi-annual basis.

K4GSO, (Continued)

The duplexers were installed around 1985 and have been in continuous operation. One was found defective in 2015 and removed from service. The set was subsequently tuned to work with three on receive and two on transmit (or vice versa).

They were checked in 2019 for alignment and were still spot on, however they have been showing their age lately and must be replaced before hurricane season with something more current. We did contact the company that made them (TX/RX), and they were very surprised to hear that they have been in operation for over 35 years. (The people that work for the company have been there about that long and don't remember that model as it was made way before they started.)

There is a backup diesel and LP gas backup generator that the city maintains which comes on automatically during power outages.

Agencies supported at that site include the National Weather Service which is connected via telephone hardline to their equipment. Marion County, the City of Ocala and several other agencies are located there as well.

The tower was erected in 1994, is 500 feet tall and encompasses a rather large chunk of real estate in Ocala. It is located near College Road (SR200). When facing Sonny's BBQ, it is the tower directly behind it. The property was donated to the city by Ernie O'Berry, K4OSM many years ago. It is known as the Pistol Range tower site.

I hope this has helped take some of the mystery out of it and maybe explained some things you didn't know. Drop a line if you have any questions.

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QSLs from KC5CMX – What's in your Card File?



Photos and Collage Thanks to Ivory Williams, W6IVY



QSLs from KC5CMX –
What's in your Card
File?



News You Can Use

[The newsletter](#) will be posted to the K4GSO website. Send information and pictures to [Marty](#)

[SSRC Logo Shirts & Caps](#)

[Green Clover Key Card](#)

[Perry Field Access](#)

[Membership Application](#)

[Buy/Sell/Trade](#)

[QST NFL](#) – NFL Section Newsletter

[Silver Springs Radio Club Website](#)

[NFL Section Website](#)

[WA7BNM Contest Calendar](#)

[NG3K DX](#)

2020 SSRC Officers

[President - Elbert Wilkinson, KQ3K](#)

[V President – Jim Burgess, KN4MIV](#)

[Secretary – Ivory Williams, W6IVY](#)

[Treasurer – Bill Gillespie, KW5BG](#)

Directors

[Ron Viola, KS4SW](#)

[Mike Condon, W9MNC](#)

[Wayne Brown, N4FP](#)

Committee Chairs:

[Membership – Carl Berry, KC5CMX](#)

[Trustee K4GSO – Wayne Brown, N4FP](#)

[Newsletter – Marty Brown, N4GL](#)

The Oracle is the newsletter for the Silver Springs Radio Club. It is intended for wide distribution to all interested amateurs. Send input to Marty N4GL at n4gl.marty@gmail.com